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ADDRESS

OF THE

HON. THEODORE F. RANDOLPH

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

STOCKHOLDERS OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION,

HELD AT THE HEADQUARTERS, MORRISTOWN, N. J.,

JULY 5TH, 1875.

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A D D R E S S .

FELLOW JERSEYMEN:

During the Summer of 1873 this property, so long and widely known as the "Old Headquarters of Washington," was offered for sale. A few gentlemen present at the sale concluded to purchase it; and having done so, formed a society now known as the "Washington Association of New Jersey," the principal object of which is to perpetuate this house with its great historic associations.

The Legislature of New Jersey have given the Association a very liberal charter. Among its provisions is total exemption of the property from taxation; prohibition to the erection of any unsightly objects adjacent hereto; police powers upon and near the grounds; and other special rights and privileges rarely accorded to corporations. In support of the place the State makes an annual contribution. The capital stock of the Association was put at \$50,000, the shares being placed at \$100 each, each share entitling the holder to a vote. These shares are not transferable, except with the consent of the Association, and then only to a direct male descendant of a subscriber. Failing in descent as indicated, the stock becomes the property of the State.

Of the capital stock there has been subscribed about \$25,000, or nearly enough, when paid, to rid the property of all debt. I regret to say that by reason of delay in payment by some subscribers, there is yet due upon the original purchase about ten thousand dollars.

I need not say to you, fellow Jerseymen, that we shall be glad to have your assistance in freeing this grand old house from all debt.

It is a grand old house, and in a grand locality.

It rarely happens in history that art, nature, and circumstance combine in elements of attractiveness. Ours is the infrequent fortune of blending much that is interesting in art, more that is charming in natural scenery, and most that is stirring in circumstance.

Of our historic State we can say that in mineral wealth, in agricultural resources, and in commercial advantages no one of all the States can rival this of ours.

Of the grateful use to which we have put our vast inheritance we can speak well. No acres in any other State are as valuable, proportionately, as ours; no minerals, of their kind, give a more productive yield than those of North Jersey; and to one of our ores at least no comparison is offered, for alone we produce the wonderful substance that in the process of its development shows uses so multiform that one is almost tempted to believe that the hand of the magician lies behind the sure results that science and art have established.

If we cannot say that our "commerce whitens every sea," it can be said that we have sheltering harbors enough to protect the Navies of the world. Of one of them, that of New York—the one-half belongs to us; and this half, with its shel-

tering western shore and deep waters, is of course the best. Nature is no niggard with her upright sons, and has an affectionate thought for those who keep good schools and good jails.

Of those artificial advantages which ever come to an industrious and intelligent people, I need scarcely speak. The manufactures of New Jersey are known everywhere, and whether they be of ponderous shafts of iron or delicate fabrics of glass, or of the thousand other productions that labor, and art, and science produce, they do constant credit to our State. That we pay more tax than any equal number of revenue districts in other States, bespeaks at once our thrift and a reasonable honesty.

What true Jerseyman does not love to hear words of praise of our noble old colleges? The graduates of Princeton and Rutgers have held the highest posts of distinction at home and abroad. To-day their skill and learning is sought by peoples who cannot speak our tongue, and whose own history runs back of ours a thousand and more years.

No State has a more thorough Common School system than New Jersey; expends more money pro-ratably to sustain it, or has more sturdy defenders of it.

Blest with a State Constitution well made at the beginning, it has had but one repairing since. Our people have had the good sense to let well enough alone, as I hope they may for another hundred years. Our State "Magna Charta" we may well love and revere, born as it was days before the Federal Constitution was adopted at Philadelphia. Among its provisions is the following enunciation of a fundamental principle, and I deem it an appropriate

day to refresh our memories with it:

"No person shall ever within this Commonwealth be deprived of the inestimable privilege of worshipping Almighty God in a manner agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience."

Singularly enough, as it seems to us now, in the very next paragraph of the instrument occurs these words:

"No Protestant inhabitant of this colony shall be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles."

I am glad to say that a more enlightened statesmanship prevailed at a later period, and upon the first occasion of amending the Constitution the sectarian clause I have quoted was stricken from the instrument, and these nobler words substituted therefor:

"No religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office of public trust, and no person shall be denied the enjoyment of any civil right merely on account of his religious principles."

This done, the instrument was in consonance with its stirring declaration of "Rights and Privileges."

Of natural, artificial and political advantages I have briefly spoken. As a Jerseyman—loving my State as I frankly confess I love none other, and loving others as I do wondrous well, how could I have done less than refer to possessions that nature with prodigal hand has lavished upon us, that art with subtlest cunning has enriched us with, and that wisdom has left with us as an inheritance.

Glad as I am on fitting occasion to tell of our State's prosperity and advantages, and glad as I am to evince my gratitude for the rich blessings bestowed upon us as a people, my duty to-day leads me to address you upon another subject, the wealth of which only

makes my poverty of thought and language more painful to me.

Fortunately for me, I have the prolific theme of New Jersey's Revolutionary history circumscribed, and my task will be finished when I have told, as simply and briefly as I may, somewhat of our local history; and repeat to you, perhaps, like a "thrice-told tale," the story of this historic house, known to all men who love the State, as having been, during the Winter of 1779-1780—the Headquarters of George Washington, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces.

If no inspiration came with the recital of the old story or if the theme were one less calculated to awaken emotions of patriotism, the surroundings of to-day should and would inspire, I doubt not, a more indifferent lover of his birth-State than I am, to the utterance of words befitting an occasion like this.

The land within which we stand is a classic land—not only in its history but in the beauty of its landscape and richness of its scenery. Almost at a glance the eye encounters the mountains in their majesty, the valleys in their verdure and beauty, and eastward and away from yonder "Long Hills" that stand sentry over the busy millions toiling at their base, the eye may rest on the great ocean, forever turning its solemn and unceasing waves to our shores.

All that is classically beautiful in nature lies around us, beneath us, beyond us. From the crest of neighboring hills we may look away to where the half-frozen troops of the decimated Army of the Revolution, turned the fast-setting tide of defeat to insured success on the fields of Trenton and of Princeton; to where the sultry Summer sun worked

more defeat on Monmouth's field than British guns could do. And almost at our feet, as we glance down the slope of Long Hill, near by, we have old Springfield—the battle of all others North Jersey men fought and won by their own valor.

Beautiful as is all the land that lies along and amid the lovely mountain range, beginning with New York's Adirondack hills, and sinking away on the plains of Georgia, baring its eastern slopes to the fresh rays of each morning sun, and catching on countless peaks the lingering light of passing days; beautiful as this lovely stretch of American scenery is, no part of it all rivals in restful peacefulness and beauty these old hills of Morris—now ours to possess, once contended for by a struggling nation's force.

Close under yonder southward hillside lies the valley of the Lowantica—beautiful in fact as in name. Within its shelter during the terrible Winter of 79-80 lay most of the Continental army of that period. The troops of Virginia and Maryland sought, alas, how vainly! on the southern slope of the Lowantica the more genial rays they were accustomed to. Even hardy troops of New England, inured to cold, gave way in strength and health under the extreme rigor of that Winter.

Disease, foul and desolating, added its horrors to the pangs of cold and hunger, and during weary months each morning drum-tap broke the stillness of the crisp air to scores of wretched hearts that heard the sound no more. Long ditches in the frozen earth opened day by day to receive the leprous dead. Sturdy sons of New England, lank-limbed, and resolute even in death, slept their last sleep

side by side with the emaciated Virginian whose clenched hand seemed almost ready to start into life as the drowsy roll-call passed his accustomed name.

Yes! just here, within sight of this venerable house, and almost within trumpet call from the hill upon which we stand, rested, if rest it may be called, the rebels of England's hate—the patriots of America's hope!

Truly this is classic ground, forever made so by the sufferings of that period; and would be classic ground had no sheltering roof been built upon it to give to the great Captain the best protection and hospitality that battle-ridden New Jersey had to offer in Revolutionary days.

When Washington was made Commander-in-Chief of the Continental forces in 1775, he adjudged that the seat of war would have the city of New York for its centre, with a radius of greater or less extent from it.

Thus of necessity our State became the scene of constant military operations. The contending armies crossed and recrossed New Jersey; and I have heard many an old soldier of the Revolution say that, between the demands of insolent foes and the necessity of starving friends, sometimes passing their slender granaries in the same day, Jersey farming was a tough business in Revolutionary times.

The farms of Middlesex and Morris were largely cultivated by women and children in some years of the war, and many a field of corn was cultivated by women from whom we Jersey men are proud to claim descent. And how proud we are now that have a Rebel ancestry. But they won.

Abundant as is the harvest to such as

reap for historic wealth, I know too well how carefully these fields were reaped years ago. Of all the writers of our local history I know of no one that has brought to his work more of feeling and faithfulness than the Rev. Dr. Joseph Tuttle, now President of Wabash College. Without his work you would have had to-day only the work of an indifferent gleaner; with it you will have some fruits of a harvest.

Morris county is peculiarly rich in Revolutionary reminiscences. During two winters Washington established his Headquarters at this town. The place where the younger Ford built the powder mill; the sight of the old magazine; the Arnold Tavern; the Knox Headquarters; the camps on the Wicke farm; the Lowantica hospitals, and the sacred little "God's Acre," are all here about us. But peerless among them all stands these Old Headquarters within which lived the great commander.

The disasters of 1776 terminated in the retreat of Washington beyond the Delaware. To the veteran soldier this march, through half-frozen mud, so terrible to endure, was known as the "Mud Rounds." Only about 4,000 men followed Washington at this period. Deep gloom had fallen upon the country, but joy sprung to every patriot heart as the brilliant victories of Trenton and of Princeton closed the year of '76 and opened that of '77. In January, 1777, soon after the victories at Trenton and at Princeton, Washington established his headquarters at Morristown—at the Arnold Tavern. During this Winter he made the acquaintance of the family of Col. Jacob Ford, Jr., the builder and owner of this house, since made famous

by its illustrious occupancy. Col. Ford lived but a short period after this meeting with Washington, having contracted a fatal disease during the short campaign in which he commanded and that ended in the battle of Lyons Farms or Springfield. So faithful had been his service to the Continental army that Washington himself ordered military honors paid at his funeral.

The powder mill which Col. Ford built at his own cost not only furnished good powder and in needful quantities, but became the frequent object of the enemy's plans to attack and destroy. In this they never succeeded. The powder mill stood on yonder Whippany river, and not far below where we stand.

Of the founder of this venerable mansion it is enough to say that his patriotism was of that sort that induced him to preside over a meeting held at the old Court House as early as June, 1774—over 101 years ago—at which time resolutions of the strongest condemnatory character of England's conduct were passed. Of large wealth, untiring energy and industry, and with intense devotion to his country's welfare, the Declaration of Independence in 1776 found the builder of this house ready for rebellion, and willing to give to it, as he did, his life and his fortune.

This house had its foundations laid in 1772, and was ready for occupancy, and was occupied by Col. Ford's family in 1774. 'Twas builded well. Sledge, and hammer, and trowel shaped and placed these broad foundations before England's King had ceased to rule the land. Axe and adze hewed out girder and beam from massive oak that to-day defies the full century gone past.

The oaken planks that make these outer walls, caulked like the frame of a great frigate, are as sound to-day as when they sheltered Washington from the storms of the terrible Winter of '79-'80. The carved work about these doors and on these beautiful cornices are rare specimens of elegance in woodwork. It would be difficult to excel their chaste design to-day.

Those who builded have gone. Not one of all that busy throng that laid the base-stone or capped the roof-girder are in life to-day. But they builded well!

The same oaken doors open to you as they did to Washington; the massive knocker his hand was wont to touch, yet waits obedient to your wish. The floors he trod in anxious thought and with wearied brain, you may tread. The century has wrought no change in rafter or beam or floor or sheltering oak. Is there no significance in the remarkable preservation of this house?

This dwelling was for many months the home of Martha, the wife of George Washington. Within these rooms, with quiet dignity and grace, she received her husband's guests. Never idle, she set a constant example of thrift and industry. Upon one occasion some of the ladies of Hanover, dressed in their best, called upon Lady Washington at this house, and one of them, whose descendants live here now, relating the visit subsequently, said:

"And don't you think we found her with a speckled homespun apron on and engaged in knitting a stocking!

"Receiving us very kindly, she told us we should become patterns to our sex, and whilst our husbands and brothers were examples of patriotism, we should become examples of industry."

The example was not lost, for the incidents of self-denial and hardships encountered by the rebel women of Morris are enough to fill a volume.

Under this roof have been gathered more characters known to the military history of our Revolution than under any other roof in America. This fact is not generally known to our own people, and consequently the rich historic value of our old Headquarters has never been properly appreciated.

Here the elegant and brilliant Alexander Hamilton lived during the long Winter of '79, and here he met and courted the lady, he afterwards married—the daughter of General Schuyler. Here, too, was Greene—splendid fighting Quaker as he was—and the great artillery officer, Knox, the stern Steuben, the polished Kosciusko, the brave Schuyler, gallant Light Horse Harry Lee, old Israel Putnam, "Mad Anthony" Wayne, and last to be named of all, that brave soldier, but rank traitor—Benedict Arnold.

Here, too, from time to time gathered prominent members of the Continental Congress.

The furniture used by these soldiers and statesmen is here in part to-day. The dressing bureau, chairs, tables and stands have been preserved through all these years and kept within these walls. The small stand or table upon which Washington wrote his dispatches, and upon which the ink-stains he made still remain, is ours to-day. The curious old secretary he used, with its hidden drawers and quaint workmanship, stands here now as it did then. The mirrors used by General and Lady Washington you may see your faces reflected in. The old

camp-chest, heavy and solid, is yet good for a long campaign. The specie wagon—a curious contrivance as you see—long and deep and partitioned, swung between broad wheels, held all the specie, no doubt, of that almost specieless time.

In front of this house, in yonder meadow, somewhat protected from the rigor of the northern winds, lay encamped Washington's body-guard—originally a selected troop of about one hundred Virginians—afterwards increased somewhat in number. Day and night they kept watch and guard over these Headquarters, and the precious lives they guarded rested secure under their unceasing vigilance.

Many were the plans and several were the attempts by the enemy to pierce to this old house, and at one blow destroy all hope of successful revolution. We hear these tales to-day and believe them, too, for they are portions of well-authenticated history. But do we appreciate the fact that had this house been once successfully attacked and its inmates taken, all that we now are proud of as our "Revolution," would, in all probability, have been known to history as America's "Rebellion."

The mountains of Morris had much fame for their rich deposits of iron ore long before the Revolution. When, therefore, the necessity came for the manufacture of cannon and shot and shell, these old hills of ours turned out enough to supply the meagre army of Washington.

Not a few of the mountains whose ores gave us material for defence, served the purpose also of giving from their crests the "signal lights"—the well-understood and effective telegraphy of that period.

At given points from the Hudson to the Delaware, signal parties were stationed day and night, and no movement of the British could be made that was not promptly signalled by the beacon light at night, or the minute gun during the day. The gun at Bittle Hill was an 18-pounder, and was known as the "Old Sow." At the sound of the cannon the "minute man" knew his duty, dropped plough in furrow and started for the rendezvous. I talked with heroes of the Revolution long years ago, who made my blood tingle recounting their deeds, and as they straightened up their bent forms, and, stirred by old memories, flashed from their long-dimmed eyes the old heroic light, I felt it the honor of my boyhood life to have seen and heard the "old soldiers." These were the men that went to their labor musket in hand, who needed no second shot from the "minute gun" to take them from farm and field and shop, and send them swarming adown the country road to their posts. I have talked with the men who camped at this place during the Winter of '79-'80, and have been told by them that so destitute were they of shoes that their foot-prints about the camp could be tracked on the snow by the blood from their frozen and cracked feet.

They were fit husbands to patriot wives—wives who, like Anna Kitchel, of Whippany, refused "British protection," saying, "I have a husband, father and five brothers in the American army, and if the God of Battles will not care for us, we will fare with the rest!"

They were suitable neighbors of such a parson as Jacob Green, who constantly urged his congregations to fight on the

Lord's side—that being the American side. This useful and in many respects extraordinary man, signed himself "Preacher and teacher, doctor and proctor, miller and distiller." And he did indeed follow all these various occupations, strange and incongruous as they may seem to us now.

Can we wonder at the strong desire of the enemy to obtain a foothold here, and can we not understand how secure our people felt in these mountain fastnesses?

A British officer sent a bullying message one day to old General Winds, of our army, and ended it by saying that "he proposed to dine the next day at Morristown," to which the old rebel replied, "If you do dine at Morristown tomorrow, you will certainly sup in Hell!"

My friends, I have already spun out my story beyond the limits I had proposed, and if I were to follow personal inclination instead of duty, to you I would go on with the old stories I have so often loved to hear myself.

I should not close without expressing the obligations of the Association to the ladies of the county for the recent helpful entertainment given by them at these Headquarters.

A more interesting collection of Revolutionary and ante-Revolutionary relics has not been had in this State for scores of years,—if ever.

The Association is also under obligation to many citizens of our State, and especially to those of this county for valuable contributions of articles of interest to the society and to the public. We hope, in time, to gather within these appropriate walls so large and interesting a museum of articles connected with the early Revolutionary and other history of

the colonies of "East and West Jersey," and of the State, that this old mansion will become a "Mecca," toward which all patriotic Jerseymen will from time to time turn their steps; finding in time of peace a grateful repose from life's turmoil; and in times of danger to the country's peace or welfare obtain, as from a pure fountain, inspiration to patriotic purpose. I feel sure that every purpose born of Revolutionary association will have the tempered zeal which ever characterized the acts of the great Patriot whose name has rendered this house immortal.

I am bid to say that every article of interest that may be placed within our care will have its appropriate place in these "Headquarters;" will be marked with the name of the contributor, and a proper receipt given therefore. We appeal to all Jerseymen to help us in an undertaking born of pure purpose, and one we sincerely hope it may be the pride of Jerseymen to perpetuate through all time.

I have spoken to you to-day as a Jerseyman to Jerseymen! I would not, however, be misunderstood. I yield to no man in regard for the sisterhood of States—they whose unity gave life to a nation, and whose perpetuity is the indispensable pre-requisite of Republican Government.

As a Jerseyman, I love my own State best; nor time nor circumstance shall change this. The soldier who placed the blue ribbon of his Jersey lineage and enlistment on his breast and then obeyed

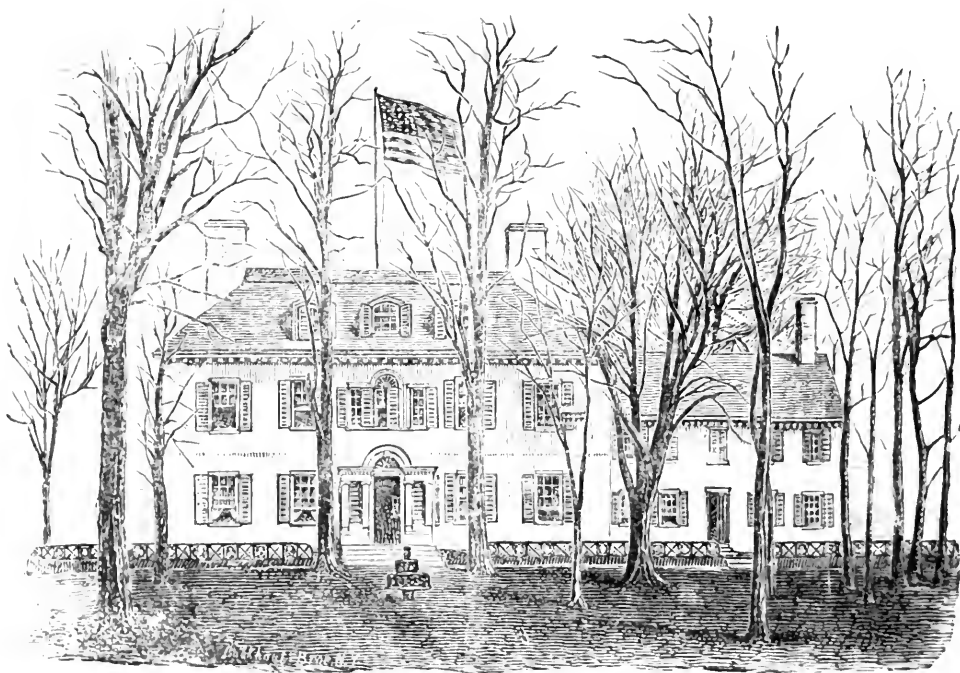
what he knew was the last order to his life, was no less an American, because he was so much of a Jerseyman. The great Apostle, whose words ring in my ear as the bugle notes of the soldier gave no less allegiance to his Christian faith, because his heart turned with anxious solicitude to his race, and in loving pride to his Jewish ancestry.

Even the compassionate MASTER, loving all men with an incomparable affection, would turn in the saddest of his ever sad hours to the "one disciple whom he loved!" Just as that human love is broadest and strongest that has its firm anchorage in domestic life, is that love of country deepest which roots itself most firmly in the near associations of one's birth State.

And now, Jerseymen, as I bid you adieu, proud of my State and of her history; proud of her Government that gives equal rights to all and privileges to none; of our laws and their execution, I would have you remember that our rich historical inheritance, and most of our material and political wealth, came through the intelligence and integrity of a people that "knew their rights and dared defend them," through the patient courage of an ancestry that, despite penury, disease and death, hated tyranny so heartily and loved civil and religious liberty so completely, as to leave in this fact the record of their faithfulness:

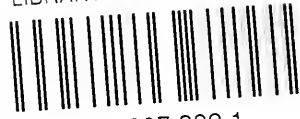
Among these hills of Morris, no Briton's foot ever trod, in Revolutionary times, save as a prisoner's.





The Washington Headquarters at Morristown, N. J.

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